

P.B. 58/642. A. R. Flexman
4620
P E R S U A S I V E

T O

Family Religion:

A N D T H E

O B L I G A T I O N ^K Christian

Parents are under to the R E L I -
G I O U S E D U C A T I O N of their
C H I L D R E N.

W I T H

A Collection of some T E X T S of S C R I P -
T U R E for the Use of C H I L D R E N.

By the A U T H O R of the Advantages of
Closet Religion.

To which is added,

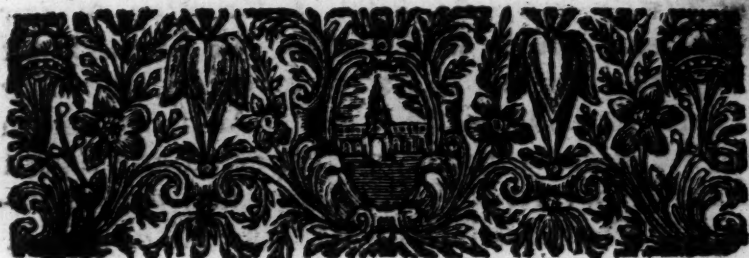
Some F. O R M S of P R A Y E R.

1899 L O N D O N :

Printed for RICHARD HETT, at the Bible and
Crown in the Poultry; and Sold by T. CADELL,
Bookseller, in Bristol. MDCCXXXVI.

Price 4 d. With Allowance to those who buy a Number.





A
P E R S U A S I V E
T O
Family Religion.

Dear FELLOW-CITIZENS,

THE *abounding* of vice and immorality, notwithstanding the *vigorous* endeavours of a number of *generous* souls, associated for putting our excellent laws in execution, by the most *legal*, and *prudent* methods, is justly lamented by good men of *all Persuasions*. Blessed be God *some success* they have ; but *how small*, to what might be expected in so *righteous* a cause ! Must not this put a *serious* mind on the enquiry, whence it comes about ? And can it be resolved into

A 2

any

any cause more evident than this, *the neglect of family worship*? God is forgotten in our families! He is shut out of our houses! Of how many is that character most just, they *live as without God in the World*? As if he stood in no Relation to them, nor expected any regard from them! As if *self-sufficient* and *unaccountable*! That this should be true of *any*, yea, of *so many families* in this great City; That our religion should be confined to publick worship; That we should satisfy ourselves with *once a week* going to church, and, in a customary manner, attending on God's worship there, and all the week behave as if this were the utmost required of us, is lamentable! Were this neglect universal, I should fear, in a little time, even publick worship would be set aside too; and so all appearance of religion banished from among us.

That this neglect should befriend vice and immorality, is no wonder: It has a natural tendency to it. When branches of a prayerless family are transplanted into families of their own, the mischief of bad example is too evident: As their fathers did, so do they; the sin is, as it were, hereby entailed, and the neglect propagated. Surely true love and tenderness to our posterity should excite parents to family religion, as the most effectual means to spread religion in the world; agreeable to our prayers, if we know what we say, when we beg God's kingdom may come.

Families are societies of God's instituting, and prior to all other societies: There the worship of God began, and for some time was necessarily confined to them. But as the world

increased, Men formed themselves into *communities* ; and, then *publick worship* took place : *men then began to call on the name of the Lord* ; which, I take, was the *original of publick worship*. But sure it cannot be imagined, that this should *supersede family worship*. The great God stands related to us in every capacity : duty and homage is owing to him in every relation. As *single persons*, 'tis express'd, by *solitary worship* ; as *families* by *family worship* ; as *communities* by *publick worship*.

In my converse I have met with but few persons, that have *disputed the obligation to this duty* : Men usually defend or excuse their neglect, by pleading *inability or modesty*. As to the first, 'tis with me *astonishing* ; since we live in a day that *abounds with helps* of that kind. Numerous are our excellent books of devotion, and easily procured by a willing mind ; in which persons, who *chose them*, may find forms suitable to the *principal occasions* of life : and, as for others, by *practice* with these helps, they may soon acquire such an habit, as to enable them, tho' persons of *mean abilities*, to perform in a *manner above contempt* ; and as they have to do with a *merciful God*, who will make *gracious Allowances*, requiring no more than he gives ; if the heart is *upright*, they may be assured, that when they do their best, tho' 'tis but *mean*, thro' the *interposal* of the great High-priest it shall find acceptance.

As for *shyness*, or *false modesty*, (for so I must call it) shall *prophane families*, without a blush, affront God Almighty, by oaths and curses, ridicule all religion, and esteem this
Gentle-

Gentleman-like, a point of good breeding; profess themselves, without shame, in the interest of the devil, promoting his kingdom, by example, encouragement, and influence? And shall profess'd christians be ashamed to tell the World they are engaged in the opposite interest? that they are on God's side? subjects of his kingdom? And that therefore, as families, they pay him homage? How awful are those words of our Lord! — him that is ashamed of me before men, of him will I be ashamed before my father and his holy angels.

CITIZENS,

Suffer me to *expostulate*! 'tis not about a rite or ceremony: 'Tis whether God Almighty shall be acknowledged by christian protestant families: whether family sins shall be lamented, and pardon implored: whether family mercies shall be supplicated, and family judgments deprecated: In a word, whether God shall be owned by us for the fountain and spring of all the good, we either have, or want? — How strict is our dependance on this great and good God! Is he not our constant benefactor; continually doing us good? does he not load us with his benefits? live we not on his constant over-flowing bounty? is he not more to us than all the world beside? 'Tis because his compassions do not fail, that we are not consumed. Should he shut up himself from us, what a wilderness would the whole creation be to us; without any one able, or inclined to relieve us! Every thing is to us no other than what he is pleased to make it. He spreads our table, and gives us our daily bread.

The

The ease, health, content, and quiet we enjoy in our families is owing to his beneficence : we could have no comfort in our nearest relatives ; shall find no faithfulness in our servants and dependants ; have no success in our undertakings ; the best laid design will prove abortive and mischievous, if he withholds counsel and blessing. There is no safety in our goings out and comings in : a thousand Accidents we and ours are exposed to, one of which may create the greatest Discomfort in our families. And what security have we from these, but in the divine protection ? 'Tis the blessing of the Lord makes rich, without which the most diligent hand can do nothing. We may labour and toil all our days, rise up early, sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness, and, after all, put our earnings into a bag with holes.

But with what christian boldness may a man that comes from family worship, having therein asked counsel and blessing of God, engage in any lawful business ; and without terror go forth into a world of snares and temptations, having put himself and family under the protection of a powerful providence, encouraged by that promise, *he shall give his Angels charge concerning thee, to keep thee in all thy ways* ?

What an aptness has this practice to make the world better ? has it not a tendency to promote religion in our relatives ; and so (as to some) to put an end to that too common complaint of *undutiful children, and unfaithful servants* ? Religion heartily embrac'd makes persons better in every relation : and if it mends families it will mend the world.

Take

Take but a view of many *prayerless families*, especially those of *persons of figure* in the world. What an uncomfortable aspect do they yield! *God* being *shut out*, what fills up his room? Instead of *prayer* and *praise*, *oaths* and *execrations*; instead of *reading the scriptures*, *plays* and *romances*, *profane songs* and *ballads*; instead of *religious converse*, *cards* and *dice*; instead of *order* and *regularity*, *reveling*, *luxury* and *excess*; oftentimes the *night* turn'd into *day*, and the *day* into *night*. Of too many families it may be said, they are but a *herd of beasts*, living to no higher purposes than the capacity of a *brute* would answer.

Look into *praying families*, what order, what *peace*, what *enjoyment* of themselves! how delighting, even to *standers-by*, to behold them *bowing the knee* to Almighty *God*, and *morning* and *evening* offering up the daily *sacrifice* of *prayer* and *praise*! It seems a faint Resemblance of the great family in the blissful world above, that innumerable company of perfected Spirits, that are ever worshipping before the throne.

As to those who keep up *solitary worship*, and also attend on *publick*, yet neglect *family worship*; who, I am persuaded, are very few; I would ask them, whether they do not think, that their families are more likely to meet with *God's blessing* and presence in *publick*, when with them they have seriously implored his blessing, than when they have neglected it, and suffer those under their care to rush into *publick worship*, without any previous thoughts on what they are going about, which family
prayer

prayer would probably excite? *Religious Duties* have that *dependance* one on another, *publick* on *private*, and *private* on *publick*, that where either is *statedly*, or *wilfully neglected*, the other is to little purpose *attended to*.

I cannot but think, that the Man that makes *conscience of closet religion*, cannot find in his heart to *neglect family religion*. He that has *tasted that the Lord is gracious*, and that 'tis *good to draw nigh to God*, will engage in every Duty, wherein that *taste* is to be *improv'd* and *heightened*. Religion *seated in the heart*, surely, will be *set up in the house*.

The hopes I have of the sobriety and piety of the rising generation is confined to *praying families*: from them only can it be rationally expected, that religion should be abetted, and the cause of God in the world supported.

I cannot conclude, without a grateful Remark on the happy posture of our publick affairs. We have our *religious and civil liberties secur'd* unto us, *by law*; our king *interesting himself in the happiness* of all his subjects. Look abroad in the world, where will you find a people under our *happy circumstances*? we seem the *envy* of all our neighbours. Our *Bibles* are in our hands; we have liberty to use them, and *understand* them for our selves; we may attend on God's publick worship *according to our own consciences*; we may sing his praises, and call on his name *in our families*, in which none can disturb us without becoming *criminal*. What would our *suffering brethren in France, Piedmont, the Palatinate, and at Thorn*, give to be in our happy state! Now
B does

does this *deserve no acknowledgment* from us and our families? How *base and disingenious* to the great God, who has so remarkably *distinguish'd* us, and given us the happy prospect of having these invaluable blessings *transmitted* to our dear posterity, should we still continue of the number of those families, *that call not on his name.*

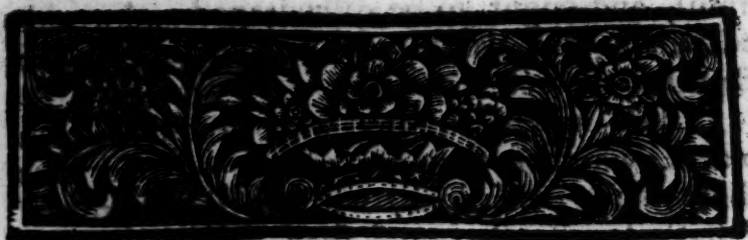
If any, from a sense of duty, should resolve, through divine assistance, to set up, and keep up God's worship in their families, it is my advise, that they be called together as soon as possible in the morning, before business comes in to divert; and early in the evening, before sleepy hours: and let nothing but absolute necessity postpone it. With prudence and forecast this may be easily done; and, if you are in earnest, you will do it: that it may be at such hours, as that, through heaviness it may not be mockery, without the exercise of the *mind* and *soul*, which must accompany all reasonable and acceptable service. In order to this, I would with some warmth, caution my fellow-citizens against a very pernicious practice, both to soul and body: I mean clubs, and appointments. A practice I could wish, were less encouraged by such, whose character, one would think, should set them out of danger of falling into it. There's scarcely any thing has given a more mortal wound to family religion than this. Oh! the time that is hereby wasted! families neglected! God's worship set aside, or, which is much the same, postponed to sleepy hours! A time when persons are unfit for the affairs of life. But this is not all the mischief: the usual conversation at such places of resort, the temper of spirit there contracted,

tracted, assures me, they are in a high degree sinful, and ought to be discouraged and avoided by all, who would with honour support the christian character.

I dare appeal to any who frequent such places, whether they can reflect on what was there said, and done, without self-reproach. What a low opinion must such persons have of family worship? who for the sake of such company, and such conversation, can set it aside, or spoil it by rendering it mock-service.

I have observ'd, this practice naturally diverts the mind from what is serious, by being so accustomed to what is vain and trifling: the *mind* so fill'd with what it last convers'd with, that there is no room for a serious thought; that, at length, they have turn'd their back upon the concerns of their *souls*, and the eternal world, and it may be, slept into *the seat of the scorner*. For a person to come from such a place, at a very late hour, and call his family to prayer (this is fact) when himself scarcely able to utter an intelligible word. Horrid insolence! What notion must such a creature form of a divine being? Surely, a practice which leads to such a profanation, must affright every one who would pay a due regard to that glorious Being, before whom the highest angel is represented as vailing his face.

Oh that I had but my wish! that some, yea many families, may set up this *delightful* and *gainful* practice: this would be a *better security* to our many national blessings, than *walls* or *bulwarks*, *armies* or *navies*: the Almighty God himself would be our defence, and dwell amongst us. And *thrice happy* is that people whose God is the Lord.



THE OBLIGATION ON

PARENTS to the pious Education of their CHILDREN, &c.



WITH the most afflicting concern have I observed the degeneracy of the rising generation, from the piety of their religious ancestors. Ancient christians are daily removing out of our world ; and should there be none to succeed them in their piety, what an uncomfortable prospect must the next age yield us ! They are the descendants of religious parents from whom we have any rational ground to hope for the continuance of God's presence among us. But it is sad to observe ! Few families of figure, but have this matter of complaint, religion dies with

with the parents; succession to their estates, and succession to their piety and virtue are separated. To many, the apprehended consequences of this degeneracy is very affecting.

Must it not put the concerned Christian upon the enquiry into the causes of this melancholy prospect? And into what can it be more rationally resolved, than the general neglect of religious education, or the imprudent management of it.

To lament in words the impiety of the present age, is mere mockery; while this means of reformation is neglected, or imprudently or superficially managed. Some there are so stupid, as to think they are under no obligation at all to this. That while they care for, and are tender of their childrens bodies, and solicitous, to their power, to provide for the future welfare of *them*, imagine they discharge the whole of their duty; and that no more is incumbent upon them. As to such, I cannot persuade myself they have any religion of their own, and deserve not the character of Christian parents, be their pretensions what they will: For they go no further, abating civilizing customs, than the most savage *Indian*, who in *their* way, are as tender of, and as solicitous for their young ones, as many who are called, and who call themselves Christians.

Others there are, who, through imprudence and mismanagement, see but little good done; and I fear, too often, more hurt than good. I would, therefore, endeavour to convince the former, of their obligation to this duty of religious education; and would assist the latter, in the most likely way, successfully (with the

divine blessing) to manage this necessary and important work ; and thereby deliver them from the keen reflections of their own mind, which will attend the neglect, or mismanagement, when they stand in sight of the eternal world.

The obligation to this duty is so strong, that it's amazing to me any professed Christians can enjoy one easy hour, while it is neglected by them.

First, Almighty God has bound it upon you in the most express manner. This, I think, is the original obligation, founded on the relation he stands in to us as our maker, and therefore our law-giver. Ought not a creature to be subject to the laws of its maker ? Is it not a fitting and becoming thing ? As he gave us our being, and has furnish'd us with noble powers and capacities, which render us subjects of moral government, he must have the justest claim to our obedience ; to withhold it, is rebellion against our rightful Lord.

The texts of scripture which enjoin it as a duty, or which commends the practice, or threatens the neglect, are many : I'll mention but one under each, viz. Deut. vi. 6, 7. *The words that I command thee, shall be in thine heart ; and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, speaking of them when thou sittest in the house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*

How well pleased was God with *Abraham* for this ? Gen. xviii. 19. *I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his household*

household after him, that they shall keep the way of the Lord.

How severely was *Eli* punished for the neglect of this duty? who, though a good man himself, yet his foolish tenderness of his Sons in their impiety, was so provoking to God, that he is left as a standing monument of the displeasure of a jealous God for this omission.

How little power has the authority of this tremendous Being, if, after this, you stately live in the omission? Is his displeasure nothing with us? who knows what the anger of a God includes in it! Know assuredly, he will not always suffer his rightful authority to be trampled on. Shall he say, Teach and instruct thy children in the knowledge of me, and of their duty to me; be painful with them, make a business of it; lying down and rising up; when sitting in the house, and when walking by-the way——And shall we behave toward them, as if all that is said in Holy Writ were words without a meaning, and we at liberty whether we would regard them or no? Has not Almighty God propriety both in us and them? Has he not said, all souls are mine? as the soul of the Father, so the soul of the Son is mine. O, endeavour to impress your minds with a sense of God's authority. Whose should *you* be? and whose should *yours* be, if not his, who gave both you and them your being, and who upholds you in being, and to whom you are indebted for your well-being, and who will, e'er long, call you to a reckoning?

Secondly, Another obligation you are under to the religious education of your children, is the solemn ordinance of Baptism; wherein, if we understood what we did, and attended to the design of its institution, we made a surrender, and dedication of ourselves, with our little ones, to Almighty God, through the mediation of the blessed Jesus: We therein recognized his claim to us and ours.

The trifling thoughts that many entertain of this solemn ordinance, must be matter of grief to a serious mind. It is no wonder at all, they have no sense of the obligation they then come under to the religious education of their children, when the institution itself is looked upon as an insignificant ceremony, that demands no regard from them, though submitted to for fashion sake, and as it is the custom of the country wherein they live. Indeed, the little pains taken by many, whose business it is to instruct people in the nature of the ordinance, and what it obliges unto, is one, if not the main spring of this prophanation. O, how serious a thing is it to transact in so solemn a manner with the God of heaven and earth! For by baptism, we, as it were, enter into a family Covenant; wherein we insert the names of our young ones, interesting them in the peculiar care and favour of God. I think it is the duty of them who administer that ordinance, to possess the minds of all concerned with a reverence for it, by inculcating upon them its nature, and design, with the obligation they then come under, to the faithful discharge of those duties, which by that solemnity is bound upon them.

How

How industrious should they be to discourage that levity of mind, and behaviour, which is too apparent in most, upon such an occasion. Were people apprized of the awfulness of the institution, would they dare to trifle as they do?

I think the import of this solemn transaction may be thus represented :

“ Most glorious God, in obedience to thy
 “ command, I do, in the most serious manner,
 “ acknowledge thy righteous claim both to
 “ me and mine ; and would by this ordinance
 “ bring myself under renewed bonds, to love,
 “ and fear, and serve thee all my days : This
 “ little one which thou hast given me, I would
 “ devote unto thee, from whom I have re-
 “ ceived it ; I would put it into thy hands,
 “ and pray that, for the sake of the blessed
 “ Jesus, it may be interested in thy covenant-
 “ favour, and share in thy fatherly care and
 “ provision. It is born in thy house, would
 “ therefore put upon it the badge of thy ser-
 “ vants ; deal thou with it as one of thine.
 “ I engaging by thy help, if thou sparest it
 “ unto me, to bring it up for thee ; endea-
 “ vouring to the utmost of my power to in-
 “ struct it in the knowledge of thy will, that
 “ it may walk so as to please thee. I engage
 “ to watch over it, and pray for it, that it may
 “ not be a reproach to thy family, into which
 “ I now enter it ; and I will instruct it to
 “ pray for itself, and thereby acknowledge its
 “ dependance upon thee, from whom all good
 “ must come. I engage to do my best in dis-
 “ charging that great trust thou hast lodged
 “ in

“ in my hand, even the care of an immortal
 “ soul ; that it may not, by my neglect, be
 “ lost for ever. I engage by my own example
 “ to back my parental instructions, going be-
 “ fore it in the way of holiness, thereby re-
 “ commending religion to *their* practise, en-
 “ couraging them in every thing that is virtu-
 “ ous and praise-worthy, and discouraging
 “ every thing sinful and unworthy of the Chri-
 “ stian name. But, because I am an imper-
 “ fect Creature myself, I will daily implore
 “ thy help, that I may faithfully make good
 “ this my engagement, depending on thy
 “ blessing to succeed my endeavours ; that so
 “ both I, and mine, may rejoice together in
 “ the day when *I* shall be called to an account
 “ how I have discharged the trust committed
 “ to me, and *they*, how they have made good
 “ the engagements they then come under ”.

If this be the language of this solemn trans-
 action ? then surely none can say, they are
 not under the strongest obligation to the reli-
 gious education of their children. Is it no-
 thing, in such a manner, to stipulate with the
 God of heaven ? Can we think, where this
 duty is neglected, that a just God will not ani-
 madvert on so much treachery, and perfidious-
 ness, that accompanies it ? To dedicate a child
 to Almighty God, with such solemnity, beg-
 ing his blessing upon it, engaging to educate
 it for him, and never mind it more ! What
 christian must not shudder at the aspect such
 trifling will have, in sight of a judgment
 bar !

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Nature obliges to this duty ; and, if Christians indeed, a *renewed* nature strengthens the obligation.

Nature obliges you to this. Are they not your offspring ? the tenderest part of yourselves. You have been an instrument to bring them into a world of snares and temptations, by which they are greatly exposed on every hand ; and will you do nothing to preserve them from the peril into which you have brought them. Lions and Tigers, the most savage of brutes, are tender of their young, and will expose *themselves* to screen them from danger : Will you be more savage than they ? It is taken for granted, you believe your children have souls, and that their souls are their principal part, and therefore deserve your principal care and sollicitude. Now, if all your concern be confined to body, and do entirely terminate in *that*, without regard to their immortal souls, you are cruel and unnatural. What would the world say of you, should you be anxiously solicitous to furnish your children with Toys, and Baubles, for their amusement, and, at the same time neglect to provide them with necessary food ? You say you love them, but you instance it in nothing more than you do to your horse, or your swine. Are you not herein unnatural ? You feed them, and cloth them, and having done this, satisfy yourselves as having done the whole of your duty ; while the immortal soul, which must be happy or miserable for ever, is entirely forgotten. There's as much natural affection in the *Hotentots* to their young, as this comes to. Will this be called
 2 love

Love to your children, when you come to appear before your judge ? It is brutish fondness, not rational love ; for shame, act more becoming reasonable creatures, or you are a reproach to the rational nature.

Methinks, we should never look on our children but with this thought :

“ This child of mine is capable of loving,
 “ and serving, and enjoying the God that
 “ made it, or will be exposed to remediless
 “ misery : What shall I do who am its parent,
 “ to secure its happiness, and prevent its
 “ misery ? I love it, and am tender of its
 “ health and comfort ; care not what I do to
 “ provide for its present life : But what *shall*
 “ I do ? What *have* I done for the safety and
 “ happiness of its immortal soul ? Shall I sa-
 “ tisfy myself to see it secured (as I think)
 “ against the evils and uneasinesses of sickness,
 “ pain, or poverty ? (though very often these
 “ evils will befall it, do what I can) But what
 “ will become of it, when it has done with a
 “ present world ? What will be its state, when
 “ it enters upon an endless duration ” ?

Must not natural affections work very strongly, when excited by such thoughts as these ? Can you love your children, and not compassionate their case, as entering on the stage of life, where they are to act a part ? And *whose* care and concern should it be that they act their part well, if not the parents ? Does not natural affection plead for this ? But then, what adds to the obligation is, if you are Christians indeed, you are made partakers of a divine nature. Every nature, by instinct, is enclined to propagate its kind. And this is inseparable

table from a new nature, *Acts xxvi. 29.* I would to God, not only thou, but also all that bear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds. There's not a sincere Christian but would carry as many to heaven with him as he could; his Christianity inclines him to this. Were it in his power, the blessed Jesus should not have one rebellious subject, nor the devil one willing slave. It grieves him to see any subjected to the tyranny of that murderer of souls, while a Saviour stands with open arms to receive, and imbrace every repenting, returning sinner.

Now, must not this principle work strongly in the heart of a pious parent towards his Offspring? Profess what we will, if we find not our souls biassed this way, it is a challenge to our Christianity. Do I love, and fear, and serve the God of heaven? and, can I bear the thought, any dear to me, and whom I love as my own soul, should live in stated rebellion against him? Do I profess to value the favour of God more than life? and shall I not do what I can to interest my dear children therein? Is this world disclaimed by me as a portion? and shall I not endeavour for better provision for my children than that can be? I am sure there are some who know, by experience, the powerful workings of this heavenly principle. Oh! the thoughts of heart lest God should be provoked, and religion reproached by any who sprang from their loins. Witness *Job, Chap. i. ver. 5.* *Job sent and sanctified his children, and rose early, and offered burnt-offerings, according to the number*

D ber

ber of them all : for Job said, it may be my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

Let us therefore, this way, give proof of our christianity : a concern for the interest of God in the world is all grimace, if we neglect those who are under our immediate care. Love to God and the Redeemer, is ever attended with love to the souls of men ; therefore, in the first place, to those who are our descendants,

Now : Can we find in our hearts, to dispute the obligation to this duty ? But the more to enforce it, let me add a few motives, that, if possible, I may prevail with some who have hitherto neglected it, vigorously to set about the practice of this necessary and Important work.

First, You will hereby best secure to your selves comfort in your children. May I not rationally expect this from a child with whom I have been painful in instructing it in its duty, both to God and man ? One for whom I have put up many a prayer, and over whom I have kept a constant watch ; than from one whom I have neglected, and never troubled myself about, any further than to supply its wants, as to body and time ? Can you think, that a child left to it self, accustomed to be indulged to passion and appetite, should contribute so much to your comfort, as one you have carefully brought up in the fear of God, and a sense of the eternal world ?

Pious children will be sensible, you have in the best manner instanced your love to them, by your painful endeavours to promote their
ever-

everlasting happiness : and this will secure their love to you. And what comfort may you not expect from a child that loves you, from the most generous principle ? How ready will they be to assist and help, wherein you need it ? How do you hereby engage their prayers for you ? And *in my account*, there's a great deal in that. For a pious parent to be able to say, *I have a child who daily prays for me* — For my own part, I value it at a high rate. A regard to God, and a sense of gratitude, will engage them to study your ease and comfort. But this you cannot rationally expect from a child whom you have neglected.

What delight must it yield you on the borders of the grave, to think your surviving descendants will be serviceable to the interest of God in the world, when you are laid in the dust. That religion will live in your family, tho' you die : and tho' death separate you from your dear relatives for a time, you have hope to meet again in the blissful world above, and join in the worship and service of that state ; an image of which was your family, when joining in his worship here below.

But not so, with those parents who live in the neglect of this duty. What have such to relieve them under the overwhelming trouble that will attend the death of a wicked neglected child ? How keen are the reflections when forced to say — “ A child of mine is
 “ passed into the eternal world, but I was
 “ not faithful to it : I did not counsel and admonish, I did not pray with it, and for it,
 “ with that fervency and frequency as be-
 “ came

" came one who knew its danger, and the ac-
 " count I had to give of the trust committed
 " to me. This child, which should have
 " been to me as my own soul, to *it* have I
 " been so cruel, as to contribute nothing to
 " prevent its everlasting misery." Have you
 no bowels of compassion for your dear off-
 spring? If your stupidity be such, as to mat-
 ter not what becomes of them as to the future
 world, if you can but have the poor satis-
 faction of seeing them prosper in this, I must
 say, you are not the persons I would address to,
 if you take up with a satisfaction so mean.
 Should it be so, do they grow rich and great,
 if they are not pious, their wealth and pro-
 sperity will but furnish more fuel for their
 lusts, and render them capable of doing the
 more mischief in the world, as *all* they have
 will be list'd by them in the devil's service;
 and this, long of you. And if you can be
 easy under this, you seem to have renounced
 all interest in God your selves. A melancholy
 thought! for children to go forth from under
 your roof, under the government of unbridled
 appetite and passions, they'll become pests to
 all about them.

It is madness to imagine, that your beha-
 viour to your children will not be inquir'd in-
 to; and must not the approach of that day of
 inquisition be terrifying? Conscience will sooner
 or later be awaken'd; and the terror and tor-
 ment *that* will occasion, will be ten thousand
 times more, than any trouble from your children
 on worldly accounts. Should they, by their vice,
 impoverish you; of which there have been a
 multitude of instances. Alas! what is that

to the stings of conscience, from a sense of your neglect? For your own sakes, therefore, be awaken'd : you little think what a weight the blood of souls will be. O the anguish of mind this thought will occasion! " An immortal
 " soul put under my care, by the God of heaven,
 " and which I have, in the most solemn manner, engaged to bring up in his fear; alas! it
 " was the least of my care to make it good :
 " I have been as kind to my dogs, and my
 " swine, as to my children. Now my guilt
 " stares me in the face; I see, tho' too late,
 " their ruin lies at my door; and should I
 " miscarry too, what a terrible meeting will
 " there be with my wicked and rebellious
 " children in that world of recompence!"

This (may the child say to its negligent parent) " Do I suffer through your unfaithfulness; you should have taught and instructed
 " me; but you did not: you should have
 " told me of my danger, and assisted me to
 " escape it; but you did not, tho' under
 " the strongest engagements to it." —

Would you therefore prevent a misery so aggravated; all the discomfort of a present world, and the terrors of the next, make conscience of this duty of religious education.

Thirldy, You will hereby become publick blessings.

A child of yours may be an instrument of supporting and spreading religion in the world. You know not how extensive your usefulness may be: a pious child, when transplanted into a family of its own, will, in all likelihood, be as industrious as you have been, to instruct those who are under his charge; hereby reli-

gion will gain ground in the world, and the Redeemer's kingdom be extended. And who that has any love to Jesus, would not rejoice to see any of his descendants, an instrument to better the world? Love to your dear country calls for this; you hereby assist to entail a blessing on posterity: the ages to come may be more virtuous by your means; yea, more pious through the prayers, instructions, and example of your descendants.

To send forth into the world a religious pious child, is the truest patriotism. None serve their country like such parents. It is vain mockery, to complain of the wickedness of the times, while, by the neglect of education, we do nothing to mend them. But faithfulness herein is cleansing the spring. Would every christian parent engage in this work, we should soon discern another face on the world; and without it, I know not any thing but miracle can reform us.

Fourthly, By this you best provide for your childrens comfort in present life: the wise man tells us, *wisdom is health to the navel, and marrow to the bones*, Prov. iii. 8. Virtue has the advantage of vice, even in this world.

What contributes more to the health and comfort of life than temperance and sobriety? The man who has mastered his appetites and passions, *i. e.* brought them under the government of reason and religion, how much uneasiness and torment does he prevent? Whereas a child, uninstructed, in him appetite and passion govern; it lies at the mercy of impetuous lusts, hurried on only by inclination: what

what can be hoped for from such an uneducated creature ?

Parents imagine they have provided well for their children, if they leave them wealth in abundance ; and that thereby, they have secured them against all the evils of life ; whereas it is a security against but one, that of poverty, and not always against that ; for parents often, by neglect of pious instruction, lay a foundation for that luxury and riot that soon consumes the largest patrimony, or expose children to the intrigues of such who will do it for them. How many instances have there been of this ? that a large estate has rendered an untaught child a prey to the avarice, or lust of a vicious wretch. But should they, by frugality and worldly wisdom, improve their patrimony, and accumulate riches ; add house to house, and field to field ; yet, alas ! if it be an uninstructed soul in the matters of religion, it is destitute and naked, poor and blind. How affecting a sight to a serious mind, to see a child, an heir to a great estate, through the neglect of parents, unfurnished of those pious principles, that only can secure a soul from the snares of wealth, and render such a person a blessing to the world.

Let me now prevail with my fellow christians, into whose hands these lines shall fall, to set about this important duty ; and do it frequently, seriously, with the most tender affection, join'd with a parental authority.

And if indeed you are desirous to succeed in it, I would give the following Directions.

First, Be sure you are truly pious your selves. Without this, it will be with a very ill grace that you attempt to instruct your children in the matters of religion. Your endeavours will want that warmth and fervour that's necessary to give them force.

If you behave contrary to the instructions you give your children, you have but an indifferent prospect of success. Vital religion governing in the heart and life, will recommend what you say, when you advise to nothing but what you practise your self; when you can tell them from your own experience, the delights and pleasures that are to be found in religion's ways; and therefore invite them to the same experience: this must add force to the instructions you give them.

Nothing is more lamentable, than for a professed christian parent to be a stranger to real religion; how incapable of service to the souls of his children? Should he attempt any thing, how cold and lifeless will those attempts be? And 'tis well, if instead of being respected and honoured, he becomes not the scorn and contempt of his children; while he professes to endeavour a forming their minds, to a liking and practice of that which he likes not to practise himself. And indeed, unless you are pious your selves, you will want a disposition to this duty: for having no concern upon you to secure the eternal happiness of your own souls, you cannot pretend to be really concern'd for the souls of your Offspring; for you want an inclining principle. Piety, as well as charity, should begin at home, other-
wise

wife you cannot deal with them as one in earnest ; your words will freeze upon your lips, for want of a due sense your self of what you are speaking of to them. When children see you in earnest, that it is not for form sake you apply unto them, but from a sense you have your selves of the importance of the matters you are instructing them in : If this be the happy state, it will be a most powerful prompter to the practice of the duty, and will best direct you in the manner of performance with success.

Secondly, Begin with your children betimes, you know not how soon they are capable of instruction. Under this head I would principally address my self to mothers ; they have some peculiar advantages for discharge of this duty. What an honourable testimony is borne in sacred writ, to the diligence of *Louis* and *Eunice*, who instructed *Timothy*, when a child, out of the holy scriptures.

Your own tenderness of them must be a mighty spur to your faithful discharge of this duty. Must not a child, the fruit of your own bowels, which has hung at your breast, and been dandled on your knee, with which you have been so much delighted, powerfully engage you, to endeavour it may not be lost for ever ? You are dear to your little ones ; your constant presence with them, and tenderness of them, has form'd them to a delight in you : And will not this give an edge to all your instructions ? will it not engage a regard to what you say ? Be therefore early in your attempts, lose no time : when you are diverting your selves with them, and they express a delight
in

in you, drop a serious word in a manner they may understand you : direct their eye upward, that what you say may abide with them all their days.

How many persons, eminently serviceable in their generation for the honour of God, and the good of souls, have acknowledged, that the first seeds of piety were sown by the hands of a pious mother. If you succeed, you will be a publick blessing ; as being an instrument of reforming the world : the children unborn, may have reason to bless God for you. I say this the rather, for the encouragement of your sex, who, it may be, have too mean an opinion of your selves in the point of religious education. How easy a thing is it, in the midst of your innocent prattle, to your young ones, to drop a word of God and heaven. When you give them their food, or any thing that's good, and which they love, tell them from whom it comes, even from the God of heaven, from whom all good comes, &c.

You cannot but see how diligent the emissaries of the devil are, to poison and corrupt the minds of young ones ; and will you be less diligent to arm them against their destructive attempts ? How startling is it ! that there should be found any called christians, who are so far in a confederacy with the devil, as to bring up their children for him. How shocking is it, to hear a child who can hardly speak plain, lisp out its oaths and curses, and call upon its Maker to damn him ? This is true in fact. Would it not make a man's flesh to tremble, at such a hearing ? that the language of
he'll

hell should first employ the tongue of a reasonable creature !

Let me then prevail with *you* mothers, to counteract the destroyer of souls, to do your best ; that those who sprang from your bowels, and upon whom you have laid out so much care and tenderness, may not be miserable for ever, by your neglect.

With what attention have I seen a child upon the mother's knee, listen to her serious prattle, and drop by drop have retain'd a sense of serious things, to my surprize.

Were this duty early attended to by the mother, it would, in some measure, make up the too great neglect of the other parent ; who are ready to excuse themselves by want of time ; tho' generally, that excuse is a fallacy ; time is to be redeem'd, and would be redeem'd, were there a sense of duty, and a love to immortal souls.

Thirdly, Secure an interest in the affections of your children. This is of great moment in the discharge of this duty.

There are some principal and necessary branches of education which can't be carried on with success, till children are assured of the tender love of their parents : I mean, the government of their passions, the mastery of their appetite. This will occasion some uneasiness, but must not be omitted ; for without this self-government there will want a foundation for piety and virtue. But tho' this may be ungrateful to young ones at present, yet, when once they are satisfied you love them, and have wone their love to you, it is incredible with what ease your authority will be supported :

ported : the least intimation of your will, tho' but by a nod or a beck, will find a ready compliance.

Render your company delightful to them. Carry it with all the tenderness and good humour possible, *fathers provoke not your children to wrath, lest they be discouraged*, Col. iii. 31. Keep them not at too great a distance. Let parental authority be supported by a kind and affable carriage toward them ; for, I believe, nothing will support *that* like it : a morose, surly behaviour will alienate their affections from you. Some parents are of so unhappy a temper, as to give their children occasion to question their love to them ; and when once it is so, their instructions will be little heeded. Be angry with them for nothing but a plain fault, and let not your anger exceed its due bounds. Indulge them in nothing sinful, or that leads to it ; and when reproof or correction is necessary, let it be attended with the bowels of a parent, and let them know it. When once they are brought to delight in your company, what advantage will it give you ? your instructions will make their own way, and even force a regard ; but when parents presence carries terror with it, they will be easier any where, and in any company, than in yours.

When they behave well toward you, encourage them, let them know they please you, and then they will love to please you ; thereby the ungrateful thing (correction I mean) will be needless.

Were parents prudent in the distribution of their favours to their children, agreeable to
their

their deserts, it would have a mighty influence both on the good and bad. If dutifulness and sobriety always entitled a child to distinguished love and favour, dutifulness would be encouraged, and undutifulness shamed, and dashed out of countenance. But, alas ! how often have I observed, if there be one rake in a family, he is a favourite ; and the peace and welfare of all besides, shall be sacrificed to answer the demands of his riot and debaucheries : What can be more preposterous ?

Fourthly, Accustom your children to attendance upon religious worship, both publick and private, as soon as possible, without disturbance to your selves or others.

As for family worship, let it be so managed, as that children may not account it an uneasy task. I wish more wisdom were exercised by many pious persons in this matter. How many are there who render family worship a burden ? tying out children and servants with the length. I cannot help thinking, that, as this part of worship is managed by some, it were better let alone : some young ones have been hereby so prejudiced against religion, as an intollerable yoke, that when they come to be their own, (as it's call'd) have abandon'd it for ever.

It's a possible thing, by christian prudence, so to manage the duties of family worship as to render them delightful ; but when through weakness it becomes a toilsome task, and therefore unpleasant, no wonder children endeavour to get rid of it as soon as possible : I fear many a soul has been lost this way.

It is the incumbent duty of every christian, to set religion in the most amiable light, especially to the view of children and servants ; that it may appear in an alluring dress, and thereby rescue it from the reproach cast upon it, as a sour and morose thing ; and that, when embraced by any, they must bid adieu to chearfulness and delight ever after. This is a false report, a vile slander ; religion knows nothing of such a temper. It is want of religion, or defectiveness in it, is the ground of this calumny.

Therefore let parents walk wisely towards their children, keeping this in their eye, as one end they pursue, *viz.* To reconcile them to religion as a pleasant thing.

Direct and assist them in their attendance on publick worship : Awe their minds with a sense of the presence of God there, who observes how they behave. Labour to set their ends right in attendance : encourage their attention. Expect, and require some account of what they heard, making allowance for difference of capacity : I cannot think it just, to exact from all children alike. And be sure to encourage proficiency in knowledge and seriousness ; for human nature is of such a make, as to expect encouragement from superiors in what they do well.

Content not your selves with their joining with you in publick and family worship, but deal with them in private ; the Lord's day evening is a proper season. How serviceable will you be hereby, for the promoting the success of publick ministrations ? They will hereby come to publick worship prepared to receive

receive benefit. Talk with them in the most familiar manner in language they understand, suited to their age and capacity. By questions try their judgment, and encourage pertinent answers; help them out when at a loss.

I am persuaded, one principal reason of the unsuccessfulness of the publick ministry, is owing to the neglect of family instruction. Parents throw off all the work upon ministers, whereas they should be workers together with them, and so further their success.

Fifthly, Often inculcate upon your child the great and important matters of religion. Trouble them not with the peculiarities of any particular denomination of christians; endeavour they may be christians *indeed*, and then you sufficiently provide for their safety and comfort. Tell them often of their dependance on the God who made them; that all the good they ever received came from him; that all their future wants must be supplied by him: a child of three years old is capable of understanding this. Tell them they are sinful creatures, disaffected to this good God; that they cannot be happy but in his favour; but that, as sinners, they are exposed to his displeasure: therefore tell them, of the need they stand in of a Saviour to make their peace with a provoked God. Tell them who this Saviour is; of his ability and readiness to be *their* Saviour; what he has done for them to procure their pardon and acceptance with God. Tell them of his suitableness to their distressed case. Explain to them the terms of acceptance with God, and eternal life. Ac-
quaint

quaint them with what he requires of them, in order to their interest in the blessings their merciful Saviour has purchased; and his readiness to help and assist them to do what he requires. Rivet on their mind the necessity of renewing grace, without which pardon alone would not make them happy. Mind them therefore of the necessity of holiness, as what only can dispose a soul for blessedness in the heavenly world. Tell them what it is to be holy: it is to be devoted to the love, and fear, and service of the God of heaven, through the mediation of the holy Jesus. And that herein they cannot but be happy, and can be so no other way. Often mind them, that present life is the time, and the only time of preparation for an endless life beyond the grave. And that the God who now sees and observes them, will be their judge. Whatever you do, labour to beget in them good thoughts of God. That his pity to a lost world inclin'd him to send his own Son on the kind design of saving sinners; and will save *them* in particular, if they are but willing to be saved by him. Put them often upon prayer to God, assist them with proper helps, of which we have many: Dr. *Watts's* book of prayers no child should be without; wherein they will have a help for every occasion, suited to their capacity. Tell them they are dying creatures, live in a dying world, and that in a little time God will be *all*, and this world nothing. Instruct them what dying is, what you mean when you say of any, *They are dead*. This will be of use to strike the mind into seriousness, when we hear or tell such news.

To die, is to change worlds ; a momentary, transitory world, for an eternal, unchangeable one. Or, in other words, To die is, for an immortal spirit dislodged from body, to pass into the world of spirits, stript of all disguise, to appear at the bar of its omniscient judge, from his mouth to receive a fixing irreversible sentence, either for happiness or misery eternal, *according to what it has done in the body, whether good or evil.*

Furnish your children with some plain texts of scripture, such as have the most immediate relation to christian practice ; those scriptures that assert the omnipresence of God, the evil and desert of sin, the worth of a soul, the shortness and uncertainty of life, the nearness and certainty of death, with their awful issues, &c. A few of which I insert at the end.

Early check and discourage a spirit of bigotry, it has been in all ages the plague of the world. Recommend a catholick, that is, a gospel spirit. Instruct your children in the beauty and amiableness of a generous temper : It is truly God-like : A mind that confines not its love and regard to a particular sect or party of christians. To whom piety and goodness is dear, in whomsoever it is discernable ; that is, above the influence of narrow contracted principles. Instead of attaching your children to a party, labour strenuously to possess them of a hearty love to all christians, as *such*, whatever denomination they go under, and let them observe, such a temper of mind governs you. This will greatly heighten their usefulness, and render them

a credit to the religion of Jesus, which enjoins, and fixes this as the character of the disciples of that heavenly master. To this end, often mind them of the great stress the gospel lays upon this frame of mind ; for love to God and man, is the very life and soul of christianity. Tell them, that all who fear God and work righteousness, are accepted of him : That all pious persons are the children of God, and heirs of heaven : That nothing is so truly amiable as holiness ; for it is God-likeness, and wherever that is discernable in any, such a one is a truly excellent person, as having an excellent spirit, tho' he worship God in a different manner from us, and be his circumstances in the world ever so mean.

Take special care of your childrens companions and associates. Be cautious who you entertain as servants. A pious servant is an invaluable blessing ; such a one has been an instrument of real good to children, even when parents have been negligent, much more will they be serviceable when parents are faithful. Endeavour all about your children are friends to religion, at least, that none are declared enemies. A neglect of this has been the bane of many a hopeful young one, notwithstanding the endeavours of a pious parent.

Next to their company look to the books they read ; furnish them with such as are useful, suited to their genius and capacity ; and keep them from such as are hurtful. Without care, their souls may be poisoned this way. Books have an equal influence with company for the forming both the mind and
man-

manners. Especially recommend to them the daily reading of the holy scriptures, which will make them wise unto salvation ; and in this be your selves their pattern.

When about to send them forth into the world, study their genius, suit their employment to it ; which will heighten their usefulness, and render them easy. Many a good genius is spoiled for want of this, either by placing them too high who might be very useful in a lower station, or placing them too low, when their capacity and inclination suited them to an higher one. But be sure your main concern be to place them where there are the fewest snares, and the greatest helps for their souls. Let not any worldly consideration tempt you to over-look this. Remember, the soul is precious, and nothing is valuable but in proportion to its serviceableness unto *that*. It has grieved me to see the hazard children have been exposed unto, in alliances made through the avarice of a parent. I cannot but call that man's christianity into question, be his profession what it will, who in the disposal of his children *any way*, confines his regard to worldly considerations. The disappointments such persons have met with, even in what they principally aim'd at, must needs be afflicting in a serious hour. The just God often pours contempt on those who contemn him : In this, as well as in other instances, it has been found. They who honour God, he will honour ; but they who despise him, shall be lightly esteemed.

Watch over your own behaviour in the presence of your children. Its example must give force to your instructions. Let nothing be said or done by you, to make them think you are not in earnest. Walk within your house in a perfect way. How defective are many herein? They keep not that watch over their lips as they ought, are too much off their guard; and children are observant, they more easily take in what is bad, than what is good. Let them not hear a word from your mouth, nor a practice in your walk which you reprove in them. In this sense, reverence your children.

Finally, To all add fervent prayer to God, for his blessing on your endeavours. Never bow the knee to your Father in heaven, but bear your children on your heart. Be as painful as you will with them, 'tis the divine blessing must render all successful; he must give a teachable mind, and open the ear to discipline; from him they must receive understanding, and become willing to receive instruction. To this God, therefore, let your eye be frequently directed. And not only pray for them, but pray with them, you and them alone; in the most serious and affectionate manner, recommend them to the peculiar care and favour of their father in heaven; plead his promise, your own solemn dedication of them to his service; above all, plead the merits of the redeemer, who, when in our world, manifested so tender a regard to young ones. How much have you to encourage you to this? You ask a blessing which must be well pleasing to God, when you pray that your children

children may become his faithful servants ; that they may be instruments of honouring him in the world ; that they may love and fear the God who made them, and the Jesus who redeemed them.

I cannot omit one consideration which, I think, is of force to incline you to a discharge of this duty, namely,

You may educate your children. They are not violently torn from you and hurried into monasteries and nunneries, to be brought up in an idolatrous religion ; as is the case of many of our protestant brethren in a neighbouring kingdom. Let but any tender pious parent suggest to himself, what the workings of his mind must be under so overwhelming an affliction.

I would say a few words on the behalf of poor servants who are a trust, and their souls immortal as your own or children's. Surely, no pious master can be so cruel as not to allow them time to provide for an eternal world. Exact not so much from them as shall so fill up their time, that, when *your* work is done, they have no spirit or ability to think of their most important concerns, or ask their souls how they do. If on the week-day this should be their unhappy case, yet the Lord's-day, one would think, might be allowed for this necessary work. Make conscience of assisting them by instruction ; think it not beneath you : Furnish them with proper helps, and encourage them in the use of them.

Let

Let me now address my self to the children of pious parents, who have been so happy as to enjoy the advantage of a religious education.

Have regard to the concern of your tender parents, for you. Believe it is from the truest love, they are solicitous about you. Attend to their instructions, submit to their reproofs, be their comfort and joy in being kind to yourselves : A most reasonable request ! Little know you of the importunate prayers they have put up for you in their most tender hours, in their private corners. How have they melted in the presence of God, when supplicating his blessing upon you, their dear offspring ! Their retirements can witness, that their heart's desire and prayer for you is, that you may be sanctified and saved. What would they do ? what would they not do (in their power) could they but secure you for the future happy world ? Have compassion on them, deprive them not of the comfort of seeing you walk in wisdom's ways. This is the requital they expect from you for their tenderness and care, and will you refuse them that, especially since your *own* comfort and safety, both living and dying, can be secured no other way ? The prayers and tears of pious parents will be a bitter ingredient, in your misery, if you miscarry. The children of the kingdom (and such are you) shall be cast into outer darkness. Imitate your parents good example ; stand up for God and Religion in the world, be not ashamed to make good your baptismal engagements ; expect, in so doing, a blessed return in answer to their many prayers for you. Cut not off the entail of covenant blessings, that the

the God of your parents may be *your* God, and *your* guide and portion for ever. And then, should you live to old age, you will wear that most honourable character, *an old disciple*.

Oh ! that ministers were inclined to a greater concern for the eternal welfare of the rising generation. May their publick ministrations, and their private visits, be under the influence of love to the souls of young ones. A kind and serious word about the concerns of an everlasting duration, might be of abiding service. May Almighty God incline the hearts of all to labour in this pious work to the utmost of their talents and opportunities, that there may be hope the interest of the Redeemer may be supported and flourish in this lower world, till time shall be no more.



A
COLLECTION
OF SOME
TEXTS of SCRIPTURE
For the Use of
CHILDREN,

Tending

To form their Minds, and regulate
their Practice, with which their
Memory may be charged, without
Burden.

THOU God seest me^a.

*The eyes of the Lord are upon the way of
man, and he sees all his goings^b.*

*There's no darkness or shadow of death,
where the workers of iniquity may hide them-
selves^c [from the eye of God]*

^a Gen. xvi. 13.

^b Job xxxiv. 21.

^c Jer. 22:

The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous ; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil ^d.

The ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord ^e.

The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom ; to depart from evil, that is understanding ^f.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom ; a good understanding have all they that keep his commandments ^g.

Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord ; but he that speaketh truly is his delight ^h.

What will it profit a man to gain the world and lose his soul ? What shall a man give in exchange for his soul ⁱ ?

My Son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not ^k.

God is angry with the wicked every day ^l.

He that sins against God wrongs his own soul ^m.

Fools they are who make a mock of sin ⁿ.

He that walketh with wise men, shall be wise ; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed ^o.

My Son, know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with an upright heart and a willing mind : If thou seek him he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him he will cast thee off for ever ^p.

^d Psal. xxxiv. 15, 16. ^e Prov. iii. 21. ^f Job xxviii. 28.

^g Psal. cxii. 10.

^h Prov. xii. 22.

ⁱ Matt. xvi. 26.

^k Prov. i. 10.

^l Psal. vii. 11.

^m Prov. viii. 36.

ⁿ Id. xiv. 9.

^o Id. xiii. 20.

^p 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

—Be not wise in your own conceit ^a.

If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men ^r.

Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God ^r.

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life ^r.

God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved ^u.

This is life eternal, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent ^x.

Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right ^y.

Children obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to God ^z.

It is appointed for all men once to die, and after death the judgment ^a.

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an angry God ^b.

^a Rom. xii. 16.

^r Ver. 18.

^r John iii. 3.

^t Ver. 16.

^u Id. 17.

^x Chap. xvii. 3.

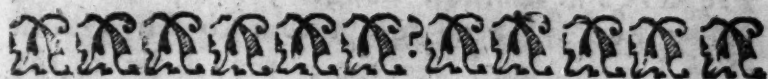
^y Eph.

vi. 1.

^z Colos. iii. 20.

^a Heb. ix. 27.

^b Id. x. 31.



A

Short P R A Y E R for a C H I L D.

MOST great and glorious Lord God,
 my maker, owner, and constant bene-
 factor; and who *alone* can be my ever-
 lasting portion. I, a poor child! would throw
 myself at thy feet, and implore thy blessing.
 Bless me, O my heavenly Father. As young
 as I am, I confess I have done enough to undo
 me for ever: but I read in thy word, thou art
 a merciful God; who, for the sake of thy
 Son the Lord Jesus Christ, art willing to par-
 don such a one as I. For his sake I beg thou
 would'st pardon all my sins, and receive me
 into thy favour. May thy Holy Spirit, who is
 the sanctifier of souls, heal my distempered
 heart: May he change its old biases, and in-
 cline me to love thee, and fear and serve thee
 all my days: May Satan be dispossessed of this
 heart of mine betimes. Suffer him not to in-
 slave me by any childish folly, or youthful
 lust. Keep me from the snares to which my
 age exposes me; and from those sins to which
 I am inclined. Be thou my keeper; I put
 myself into thy hands, O my heavenly Father.
 May

May I do nothing to forfeit thy protection. Preserve me from all danger ; keep me from every evil ; let no temptation to sin against thee be too hard for me ; may I be in thy fear continually. Bless my dear parents, instruct them to instruct me. May I be willing and apt to learn. Hear their prayers for me, succeed all their instructions. Never let me forget, thou God seest me, where-ever I am, and whatever I do. As I grow in Years, may I grow in my conformity to thy holy image, and become more devoted to thy fear and service ; that when I die, I may be happy in the enjoyment of thee, in the holy world above, through Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*





A

Morning P R A Y E R for a F A M I L Y.

O Almighty and eternal Lord God! the great creator of heaven and earth, and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Look down from heaven with pity and compassion upon thy servants, who humbly cast ourselves before thee, in a great sense of thy mercies and our own misery.

There is an infinite distance between thy glorious majesty, and us thy creatures, the work of thy hands: Between thy infinite power, and our weakness; thy wisdom, and our folly; thy eternal being, and our mortal frame.

But, Lord, we have set ourselves in a state of opposition to thee by our sin and wickedness. We humbly acknowledge the corruption of our nature, and the many rebellions of our lives. We have sinned against heaven and before thee, in thought, word, and deed. We have been prophane contemners of thy majesty, and of thy holy laws.

We have also sinned against our brother, and our own souls, by omitting what we ought to have done, and committing what we ought

not. We have rebelled against light, despised thy mercies and thy judgments, broken our own vows and promises, neglected the means of grace, and opportunities of becoming better. Our iniquities are multiplied, and our sins are very great.

We confess them, O Lord, with shame and sorrow, with detestation and loathing. We are vile in our own eyes, as we have rendered ourselves vile in thine. We pray thee to be merciful to us in the free pardon of our sins, for the sake of thy dear Son, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

And we pray thee to renew our natures, and to write thy laws upon our hearts. Help us to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. Make us humble and meek, patient and contented; and work in us all the graces of thy Holy Spirit. Preserve in us a sense of our dependance upon thee, and of our great obligations to thee. Help us, that we may love thee with all our heart, and that we may universally obey, and chearfully submit to thy Holy Will. Save and defend us from all sin and danger, from malice and ill-will, from covetousness and sensuality, from pride and vanity, and from all the deceits of the world, the crafts of the devil, and the lusts of the flesh.

Direct us, O Lord, in all our difficulties, supply our wants, support us under our troubles, enable us against our temptations, prosper our honest endeavours, and above all things purify and cleanse our thoughts. Prepare us for death and judgment, and let the thoughts thereof
awaken

awaken us to a great care and study to approve ourselves unto thee in well-doing.

Bless thy whole Church every where, and these kingdoms to which we belong. Bless and protect all states and princes of the reformed protestant religion. And bless with thy choicest blessings our sovereign Lord the King; defend him from all his enemies; let his days be many, and his reign prosperous. Bless him in his royal relations, in his counselors and in his counsels. Bless all the ministers and teachers of thy gospel, grant them such a measure of thy grace and divine wisdom, that they may, by their doctrine, and by their example, gain many souls unto thee. Help all that are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. Give them patience under their troubles, a sanctified use of them, and in thy good time a deliverance from them.

Be kind and gracious to our friends, and forgive our enemies. Accept of our humble acknowledgment, for thy preservation of us the last night, and for all thy mercies to us. And we pray thee take us into thy protection this day, and keep us both in outward and inward peace; and all we beg for the sake of Jesus Christ, who hath taught us to say, *Our Father, &c.*



A N

Evening PRAYER for a FAMILY.

MOST gracious and merciful Lord God, from whom descends every good and perfect gift, and our most merciful Father in Jesus Christ, we offer up unto thy divine majesty our unfeigned praise and thanksgiving, for all thy mercies toward us. Thon didst make us at first, and hast ever since sustained the work of thy own hands. Thou hast given us thy Son to die for us, and hast admitted us into thy church, and given us assurance of pardon upon our repentance and sincere obedience to thy holy precepts. Thou art pleased to lengthen out to us the time of repentance, and to move us to it by thy word, and by thy spirit ; by thy mercies, and by thy judgments.

Out of a deep sense of thy mercies, and our own unworthiness, we appear before thee at this time : We are ashamed of our vile ingratitude ; we have sinned, and done very wickedly. Be merciful to us, O Lord, and pardon us for Jesus Christ his sake.

Instruct us, O Lord, in all the particulars of our duty, and give us true wisdom, who hast promised to give wisdom and upbraidest not ; be with us under every trial and temptation, and suffer us not to be tempted above what we are able to bear.

Take care, we pray thee, of our affairs, and more and more direct us into thy truth. Defend us against all our enemies, but especially against our spiritual ones. Suffer us not to be drawn away from thee by the blandishments of the world, by carnal desires, by the cunning of the devil, or the deceitfulness of sin.

Work in us thy good-will and pleasure, and discharge our minds of all things that are displeasing unto thee ; of all ill-will and discontent, wrath and bitterness, pride and vain conceit of our selves, with all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness ; and render us charitable, holy, pure in heart, patient and heavenly minded.

Be with us at the hour of death, dispose us for it, and deliver us from the slavish fear of it ; and make us all willing, and fit to die, when ever thou shalt call us hence.

Bless, O Lord, all the race of mankind, let the world be filled with the knowledge of thee and thy Son Christ Jesus, as the waters cover the sea. Be gracious to thy whole church, and especially to that part of it planted in these kingdoms.

Bless the king's majesty, and let his crown flourish upon his head ; and let no weapon form'd against him prosper. Bless all his relations, and teach his counsellors and senators wisdom. And bless all the faithful Ministers
of

of thy gospel, and teachers of thy church; make them successful in their labours, and grant them daily to consider the account they must one day give. Pity the sick and weak, the poor and needy, the widows and fatherless, and all that mourn and are broken in heart : Be merciful to them according to their several necessities.

Bless our friends, and grant us grace to forgive our enemies, as heartily as we desire forgiveness of thee, our heavenly father.

We pray thee to defend us this night from every thing that is evil ; and do more for us than we can ask or think, for Jesus Christ his sake; in whose name and words we continue to pray. *Our Father, &c.*

7 JU 66

F I N I S.

Printed for RICHARD HETT,
at the Bible and Crown, in the
Poultry.

I. **T**HE Necessity and Advantages of
Closet Religion. *The Third Edi-
tion. Price 3 d.*

II. The Devout Christian assisted in his At-
tendance on Publick Worship. *Price 2 d.*

III. Prayers composed for the Use and Imi-
tation of Children, suited to their different
Ages, and their various Occasions: Together
with Instructions to Youth in the Duty of
Prayer, drawn up by Way of Question and
Answer, and a serious Address to them, on that
Subject. *By I. WATTS, D. D. The Fourth
Edition. Price 1 s.*

Also by the same Author.

IV. The first Set of Catechisms and Prayers:
Or the Religion of little Children under seven
or eight Years of age. *The Fifth Edition.
Price 2 d.*

V. The second Set of Catechisms and
Prayers. *The Fourth Edition. Price 6 d.*

VI. A Preservative from the Sins and Follies
of Childhood and Youth. *The Second Edi-
tion. Price 6 d.*

Books Printed for R. HETT.

VII Piety recommended as the best Principle of Virtue. By THOMAS NEWMAN. Price 6d

VIII. The Beauty and Benefit of early Piety; represented in several Sermons, preached to young People on New-Years Days, and published out of Compassion to the rising Generation. By DAVID JENNINGS. *The Second Edition.* Price 1s.

IX. Sacramental Exercises: Or the Christian's Employment before, at, and after the Lord's Supper. In two Parts. By JABEZ EARLE, D. D. *The Third Edition.* Price 1s.

X. Sermons on the Education of Children, preached at Northampton. By P. DODDRIDGE. With a recommendatory Preface by the Reverend Mr. D. SOME. *The Second Edition.* Price 1s.

Shortly will be publish'd,

S*criptural Devotions:* Being the New Testament considered, with a View to what every chapter in it doth furnish Christians with, as proper to assist them in their private and family Devotions. By SAMUEL BOEDE, Rector of Steeple cum Tyneham.

